



West Valley View

The community newspaper of Avondale, Buckeye, Goodyear, Litchfield Park & Tolleson, AZ

Tuesday, November 21, 2006

I-10 widening gets prelim approval

MAG committee supports widening from Sarival Road to Verrado Way

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A county transportation committee has approved \$46.9 million for the accelerated widening of Interstate 10 from Sarival Road to Verrado Way.

Before final funding is assured, the measure must pass through the Maricopa Association of Government's Regional Council and then the state transportation board.

"Is that great or what?" Buckeye Mayor Bobby Bryant said.

If that happens, the entire project could come to fruition in less than two years, Bryant said.

"That is my prediction. About a year and a half," he said.

Bryant is a member of the MAG Transportation Committee, the body that approved the funding.

Last April, Buckeye, Goodyear, Litchfield Park and Avondale met in an effort to accelerate the needed widening of I-10 in the West Valley.

The agreement and cooperation between the four entities was a first in West Valley history.

The collective councils came to an agreement to fund \$66 million in interest fees in order to speed up the timeline on the widening of I-10 from Loop 101 to SR85. The cost would be split between the cities and towns according to the proportion of the interstate that served each city.

But MAG officials half-rejected the plan at the time, approving the accelerated widening only to Sarival Road, leaving out a small portion of Goodyear and effectively squashing Buckeye's portion of the plan - an estimated 31 percent of the \$66 million, or more than \$20 million.

Although that portion was still scheduled for widening, the issue would be discussed in the future, Bob Hazlett, a MAG senior engineer, said last April when the decision was announced.

The future is here, and in December the proposal will go to the MAG Regional Council. If approved there, it will go to the state transportation board in January, Bryant said.

The funds for this portion of the widening have already been set aside, so the project could get going quickly if approved, he said.

"I think this would be done at exactly the same time that the widening is going to happen between 99th Avenue and Sarival," Bryant said.

The work on the freeway east of Sarival is slated to start toward the end of 2007.

"This is really good for our community. I am very pleased with the way the vote turned out, and this is really going to assist us on our freeways. Buckeye had a good week. We had a really good week," Bryant said.

Councilman David Hardesty agreed, and attributed it to a new unity.

"There are a lot of people working really hard. There is a lot of unity again and people working for the same goals," Hardesty said.

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